

AN ADDRESS
TO THE
ORANGEMEN
OF CANADA

HILTON
1859


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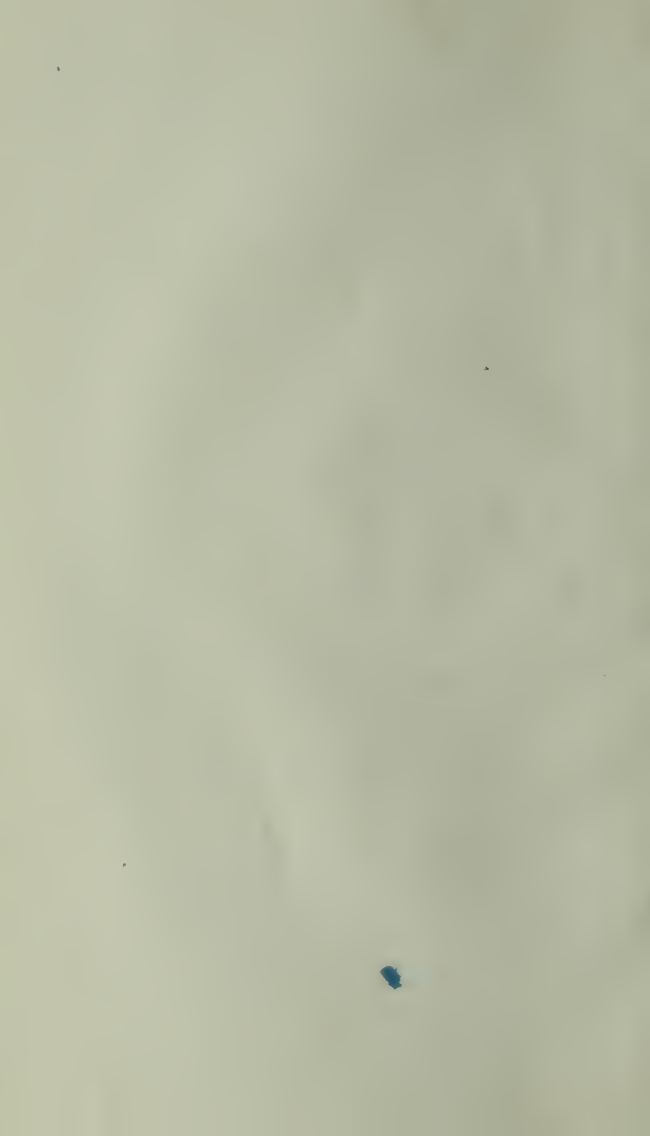
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AN ADDRESS,

TO THE

ORANGEMEN OF CANADA.

BY THE

REV, JOHN HILTON.

JULY 12th, 1859.

PRICE, 7½d.

PORT HOPE:
PRINTED AT THE "GUIDE" JOB OFFICE.

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MY DEAR BRETHREN,—

I do not consider it necessary for me to make any apology, for putting forth an address to you my fellow Orangeman in Canada, but rather consider it as a duty, which I owe to you and to myself, as a member of the Order, and more especially as an appointed ambassador of the Great King.

As an Orangeman, I feel inclined to write, in order to set forth some of those many errors, but too commonly practised by those of our body, and which give our enemies so powerful an opportunity for condemning us,—in the hope, that seeing those faults plainly set forth, some at least, may be led to amend their mode of living, and labour to make all men think well of us, by the probity and correctness of their lives, and as God's ambassador, I feel constrained to write, because the sins which thousands of Orangemen commit are of so flagrant a character that they should be publicly rebuked by every clergyman, and indeed by every true christian--sins, which if not repented of and overcome, will ultimately deprive Orangemen of any right to the name of a Christian body, when spoken of in a general and collective sense.

Perhaps some of you, no doubt, many of you, will say, surely this is harsh language, worse than we deserve, there is no occasion to be so strict, so severe, and so on; but, the fact is, that it is only the truth, and the truth but too often sounds very terribly severe, to many of us, and if you will bear with me a little while, I feel sure that you also, will acknowl-

edge in a great degree, the justice of the foregoing remarks.

The great fault then, that it appears to me that Orangemen make, is this: they seem to forget that they are, or at least should be, a religious, more than a political body—I do not mean to say that religion is banished altogether from our Lodges, but I say, that whilst we keep the *form* of religion mingled with our ceremonies, we have not kept the spirit of religion among us, either in our Lodges, or generally speaking in our hearts.

Now, to prove this, it is only necessary for any Orangeman to look at the members of those Lodges with which he is intimately acquainted, and consider their lives. I do not mean, that you should begin picking out their faults, and searching out their secret sins, but look at *their* lives generally, and at your own hearts particularly, and then ask yourselves the question, are we as a body, living as *Protestant Christians*? Yet what was Orangeism established for? Was it not to protect Protestants from the inroads and assaults of Romanism both in a religious and political view? Most assuredly it was. And again, why was it necessary for Protestants thus to organize themselves, but because they wished to follow out the true teaching of the Bible, unmixed, and untainted with false dogmas, and because they were determined to be able to *practice* the faith of the Bible, unfettered by Papal control, and to give peace and liberty of conscience to themselves, and their children after them.

Now, of course our forefathers and ourselves, are only opposed to Roman doctrine and practice, because it is sinful, and from this we take our very name of Protestant, (a name at present so widely, and often so falsely used) because we protest against Romish error. But what kind of Protestants are they, and what sort of Orangemen are they, who have no reli-

gion! Yes brethren, no religion! For sorrowful it is to be obliged to say, that many are admitted into Orange Lodges, and thousands live, bearing the name of Orangemen, who literally have no religion. Ask them what creed they profess, they will very likely answer, "Oh we are not particular, we are not bigoted, we go almost anywhere." Ask them, "Well are you a Protestant?" Why, they would be angry at the bare idea of being otherwise. They would say, most likely, "Why yes, to be sure I am a Protestant, aye, and an Orangeman as well." And I greatly fear, dear brethren, that but too many of our number imagine that by such Protestantism they may reach Heaven. Oh, how fearfully they will be mistaken in the last day.

They call themselves Protestants, but they have no true religion, and consequently no true Protestantism, for real Protestantism consists in leading a life so pure and holy, as to prove that you are quite in earnest, in protesting against sin. And those persons who call themselves Orangemen and Protestants, and yet live actually in many instances the life of a heathen, are a disgrace to their name, and to their order.

But let us bring these remarks to bear a little more closely, with regard to certain of the most common sins committed amongst us.

As Protestants, we declare that we protest against the errors of Rome, and one of those errors is the anathematising, or cursing of those who are disobedient and heretical, by the Pope or his subordinates; yet how often have not Orangemen and Protestants (so-called) been heard cursing the Pope, both body and soul—nay, how often do we not hear, not in times past, but now, how often do we not hear Orangemen and Protestants *cursing each other*, for mere trifles, wishing the souls of their fellow men, and fellow Protestants in hell. And yet such men dare to say that, they are Protes-

ants, and are not ashamed to boast of their not being Romanists, when they are showing by their own words that they have no true religion, no fear of God in their hearts. Alas! for such Protestants. Oh, miserable Orangemen! You condemn the Romanists for cursing their fellows, and then go and do the same thing. Yet, how can you, who do such things condemn the Romanists, without condemning yourselves also?

Again, Orangemen declare that they protest against Romanism, because it teaches that it is lawful to pray to the Virgin and to the Saints, as mediators between them and God, whereas the Bible declares that there "is *one* mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus." But what, brethren, is the use of protesting against such an error, fearful though it is, when the man who protests, worships *no* God, and seeks no mediator. Are there not men admitted into the Orange Lodges, who scarcely know the Lord's prayer; who have a decided reluctance to shew themselves in the House of God, who absent themselves from the Courts of the Lord's House for months together, and sometimes for years? Do not such men prove that they have no love for Christ, no holy desire for the honour of His name, no longing after Heavenly things, no true interest in the question, whether Romanists pray to the Virgin or to Christ? But yet, before the world at large, they bear the name of Protestants, and many such, as I have just described, proclaim loudly that they are Orangemen, while in very truth they are only hypocrites, claiming to be protesters against the sins of Rome, while they themselves, are completely sunk in ignorance, in carelessness, and in vice. Oh, ye false hearted, so-called, Protestants.

Again, Orangemen declare loudly against the doctrine of transubstantiation, as set forth and taught in the Romish mass, *because* that too is contrary to

the word of God. But Oh! ye Orangemen, who thus condemn sin in others, how do your actions prove that you are real *Protestants* in this respect. We condemn the mass; quite right so far, but why do we condemn it? Because it is contrary to Scripture; no other ground can be taken, but you who so signally declare your conviction upon this point, because it is contrary to the Bible, how many of you *keep* the Scripture with regard to this subject by being earnest participators of the Holy Communion at the Lord's table? Number up now your thousands of Orangemen in Canada, and see what proportion of them are communicants, and are living as communicants should live, as if they feared the living God. Are one *half* of the Orangemen in Canada communicants? Are one *quarter* of them communicants? And yet our Blessed Lord said, "Do this in remembrance of me;" but yet you will not do it. And of those who do partake of the Holy and Sacred Feast, how many are worthy? Dear Brethren, how *unworthy* in this respect, also, are the vast body of Orangemen in Canada, to bear the name of "Protestant."

And in like manner, while we protest against the sale of 'Indulgences,' there are thousands of Orangemen who take to themselves all kind of indulgences, the only difference being, that the Romanists buy them from the Pope, and Orangemen use the indulgences without buying, giving themselves up to wickedness without fear, and without constraint. Might we not go on thus from sin to sin, and show all too plainly that the great bulk of those who are Orangemen, and who call themselves Protestants, live a life unmixed with vital religion, and thus bring disgrace upon our ancient and noble Society, by their anti-christian and heathenish lives,

Again, I fear that many will say that such strong language is more than is called for. But brethren

and fellow Orangemen, is it possible for any language to be too strong, when speaking against such fearful wickedness as we see daily committed by members of our body? Remember, I do not condemn the whole body, but only those, who *do* sin, thus vilely and openly, in defiance of all religion, and in direct opposition to the rules of our society, and to the spirit of true Protestantism; and *those whom the cap fits let them wear it*, and their name is legion. Just let us reckon up the great sins practiced by thousands of our Order, and ask ourselves then, are we as a body worthy of the name of Protestants and Orangemen.—protestors against sin, guardians of social order. Is not drunkenness a common sin amongst us? Is not swearing the same? Is not foul and impure language often heard from the lips of our members? Is not God's church neglected, nay, almost forsaken by hundreds? Is not the Sabbath profaned and desecrated by thousands of men who boast of being Orangemen indeed, but whose only idea of religion seems to consist in styling themselves Protestants, and in hating the Romanists? Oh! what mighty protestors against evil. Oh! what worthy Orangemen they are, who have no fear, no love for God, and who *will not* even come to the worship of Our Redeemer.

And, look at the choice of officers for our lodges. Is it not the case that a good and worthy man is sometimes put aside, and a poor worthless character elected in his stead, because, perchance, he made more *noise* against Romanism? The Master is not always, even, if ever, chosen for his high principles and religion; but no matter what his moral habits are, even although a drunkard, or a swearer, he is oftentimes elected, because, as I said before, he makes a great noise against the name of Rome, while within his own heart, there is, but too often, a deep black pit of sin and corruption,

Surely those who do such things, and commit such wickednesses, are not the men to advance the interests of the christian religion—surely such men have *no right* to be made Orangemen, or to call themselves Protestants.

We want, Brethren, a reformation amongst us ; we want stricter rules for the regulation of our members, and we require such rules put in force and insisted upon, and any man who refuses to be reformed—any man who wilfully continues in his errors after being duly admonished, should be expelled from the Lodge, as being a disgrace to himself and to his fellows. You may ask, who is to begin this reformation? I answer, you must begin it *yourselves*. Cannot you see your own iniquities, your own faults? And do you not wish to be purged from the same? Surely, dear friends, you do not *desire* to continue in sin *always*? And, if you do not reform, Oh! what dread sorrow will fall upon you in the last great day—the day of judgment.

Perhaps it may be said that it would have been more charitable in me, to have sought to *cover* the errors of my brother Orangemen, instead of exposing them ; but, alas! the sins of which I have spoken are so notorious that they *cannot* be covered, for the miserable beings who commit such sins *expose themselves* to all around them. Neither is there any charity in trying to deceive ourselves or others ; and I trust that it is true charity which now makes me, however unworthy in myself, write to you this short address.

I want to see my fellow Orangemen, men whom no one need be ashamed to hail as brethren ; men who are never seen *staggering* about the streets, or in the taverns ; men, who when conversing, are not in the habit of mingling oaths with their conversation ; men, whose lives are pure and whose language is

chaste ; men, who love prayer ; men, who like David of old, delight in going up to the courts of the Lord's House ; men, who are striving to deliver themselves from the Egyptian darkness which now envelopes them. In fact, I long to see them men, who are living as *Christians*.

How different then would be the influence which, as a body, we might have upon society. The name of an Orangeman would be an honor, and the good and virtuous would press into our ranks. We would be able by the grace of God to advance the great cause of the Christian Church, and might do real good to our fellow men, instead of being, as at present, but too often made the mere tools of some crafty and designing politician.

And I would also say a few words with regard to the feeling, and to the language, which is at present cultivated among Orangemen, towards the Romanists, *There is too much of hatred in both to be Protestant or Christian*. That is to say, there is too much hatred against the Roman *people*. We should hate their errors, and take good heed lest we fall into them, but we must not forget that however contrary to the Bible many of their doctrines are, yet they are our brethren, for whom, as for us, Christ has died, and our duty is to *love* them as brethren, and sorrow for them as over those who are in great danger, and pray for them with an earnest heart, that they may be turned from the error of their ways. Remember what St John says, "He that hateth his brother is in darkness, and walketh in darkness, and knoweth not whither he goeth, because that darkness has blinded his eyes." "He that saith he is in the light, and *hateth* his brother, is in darkness even until now." "Whosoever *hateth* his brother is a murderer, and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him." If a man say, I love God and *hateth* his brother, he is a liar."

All these, and many other like passages, prove that we commit a very great and grievous sin, when we hate any person, no matter who they be, no matter what opinions they may hold ; we should hate the *sin*, but should love, and pity, and pray for, those who are guilty of the sin.

If we wish to win the Romanists to a purer form of religion, let us strive to win them by love, and by prayer, and by the word of God, for most assuredly no harsh means will succeed with them, and moreover, the very instant that we begin to use hard measures, or to feel hard and bitter against them personally, that instant we become partakers of their sins ; for it is the spirit of persecution which is working in us, and the persecution of others is one of their greatest faults. And here, brethren, I must also raise my voice against the very *unchristian like* harangues, which sometimes are made to your body, upon our public days, and that too by those who are ministers of religion. I allude to the *coarse and excessive* abuse, which is so often poured out against the Romanists. It is quite right that their sins, and erroneous doctrines should be pointed out to you, but is it right, is it christian-like, to rake up against them year after year, the great wickednesses which they have committed, and pour upon them a torrent of foul language for nearly half an hour at a time ?

Is such the way to win them to Protestantism ? Will such continual invectives make them think that our religion is purer than their own ? Will they be converted think you by such conduct ? I trow not. And more especially when hardly anything is said with regard to our own shortcomings, and scarcely a word of christian advice, and christian admonition is mingled with these same discourses Brethren, I have listened till my ears tingled with shame, to addresses of this sort from ministers of the religion of our Saviour, which were calculated to make

men hate, more than to make them love, which advocated war and bloodshed more than peace, which were incentives to cursing more than to prayer. But yet the speakers call themselves Protestants; alas they know not the *spirit*, of the name.

For Christ's sake, my dear brethren, let us labour to cleanse ourselves from these foul stains, and not, thus bring disgrace upon our name and calling, by such open violations of decency, charity, and religion. Let us remember that we are united for religious purposes, and should be a religious far more than a political body, and as such, let us endeavor to lead religious lives. As Protestants, let it be our heart's desire to be *true* Protestants, setting forth in our life and conversation before the world, an example of christian diligence, and christian purity; and let us not, while we protest against the sins of others, ourselves fall away into corrupt and depraved manners; and as we wish for the reformation of our Roman Brethren, let us remember that the best way to win them over, is by gentleness and love, and prayer, and by leading such godly and holy lives as shall prove that in very truth, we are following out in all its fullness, the teaching of the Word of God.

In conclusion, Brethren, let me say a few words, as to the necessity of there being more *unity of religion* amongst us. We are *united* together as Orangemen, because being *united*, we have more power to resist Papal aggression. And would not the same unity in religion give us more power to resist the devil? Are not the dissensions among Protestants held up by the Romanists as a proof of the heresy of the Protestant religion? And are they not also a real hindrance to the conversion of the Heathen? And when Orangeism was first established, it was established for the support, of the church, and of churchmen were its members composed. All divis-

ions among christians must be the work of the Evil One, as *contrary to the spirit of the Bible*, as contrary to the spirit of the prayer of our Lord, when he prayed "That they all may be one, as thou Father art in Me and I in Thee, that they also may be one in Us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent Me." Because they are contrary to the words of St. Paul, 1 Cor. 1 ch. x v., "Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you, but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind, and in the same judgment." And lastly, I speak against division because I firmly believe, and am sure, that all who contend against the "Church," are fighting against that holy "House of God, which is the Church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth," 1 Tim. 3 and 15.

And now Brethren, I hope that you will forgive any errors that may be in this address. If I have used strong language it is because I feel strongly upon the subject. If I have spoken severely against the sins practised so openly by many of those belonging to our body, it is because such sins must be forsaken and abhorred before that they who commit them can obtain, either an honorable name on earth, or a glorious one in Heaven. And my earnest prayer to God Most High, is that He will grant to us such a measure of Divine grace, as shall enable us truly to repent us of our iniquities, and to live as becometh Christians, so that at last we may all meet before the throne of the Creator, through the redeeming blood of Him, who is the only "Mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus."

I remain,

My Dear Brethren,

Your sincere well wisher,

And fellow Orangeman.

JOHN HILTON.



